



Flathead National Forest

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News Release

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August 28, 2014



Prescribed Fire Projects Planned on Swan Lake Ranger District

BIGFORK, MT - The Swan Lake Ranger District of the Flathead National Forest is planning to conduct multiple fall season prescribed fire projects when weather, fuel conditions, and air quality become favorable. Smoke will be visible from various places in the Flathead Valley and the Swan Valley depending on the location of the burn units and weather conditions.

Each project follows a Prescribed Fire Burn Plan. The prescribed fire projects are located and designed to be controlled to reduce the potential for adverse effects, or to escape as a wildland fire. These projects will be in compliance with Montana air quality standards and coordinated with Montana State Department of Environmental Quality to reduce the impacts of smoke to our neighbors, cooperators, and surrounding communities. The project areas include:

Meadow Smith Area – This project includes under-burning timber stands located within the Meadow and Smith Creek areas of the Swan Valley. These treatments will use prescribed fire for fuels reduction, vegetation regeneration, and wildlife habitat improvement.

Piper Creek Area – The Mission Upland Burning Project will be implemented in phases during the fall. A total of 1,036 acres will be treated in the Piper Creek Drainage. The project will help allow future lightning-caused fires to play a more natural role within and outside Mission Mountain Wilderness. There may be temporary closures in the area including the Piper Creek Trail # 119 during different phase of burning.

Haskill Mountain area – Logging slash from previously logged areas will be treated with fire to reduce hazardous fuels as well as create favorable conditions for natural regeneration of plant and tree species.

Pile Burning – Hand or Machine piles are located in several locations within the Swan Valley, Blacktail Mountain, and Haskill Mountain as a result of but not limited to: logging, hazardous fuels reduction in the wildland urban interface, hazard tree removal, and trail or road construction. These piles are burned to reduce the fuel loads in these areas. These piles are strategically burned based on their location, access, and weather conditions.

For additional information about these projects contact the Swan Lake Ranger District in Bigfork at 406-837-7500.

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Attachment: Map of Planned Prescribed Fire Areas